

Claim Amendments

CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for extracting a metal from a refractory material containing the metal, the process comprising fine grinding the material, subjecting the ground material to a leaching step carried out at 1 atmosphere or less in the presence of an alkaline material and an oxidizing agent, adjusting the leaching step such that to produce partially oxidized material, wherein the amount of oxidation of the partially oxidized material is between 9%-20%, and subjecting the partially oxidized material to a cyanide extraction step to recover the metal.

2. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the refractory material comprises a sulphide, a carbonaceous, a pyrite, an arsenopyrite, or a stibnite ore or concentrate.

3. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the material is ground to a p80 of <20 microns.

4. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the alkaline material is selected from lime and limestone.

5. (Original) The process of claim 4, wherein the pH of the leaching step is between 5-7.

6. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the amount of oxidation is between about 9% to about 12%.

7. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the oxidizing agent is oxygen.

8. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein the leaching step is conducted at a temperature of between 60°C-95°C.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the metal is gold or silver.

11. (Original) A process for extracting gold or silver from a refractory material containing gold or silver, the process comprising fine grinding the material to a p80 of <20 microns, subjecting the ground material to a leaching step in the presence of an alkaline material which comprises lime and/or limestone and an oxidizing agent which comprises oxygen, maintaining the pH of the leaching step between 5-7, maintaining the temperature between 60-85 degrees C, adjusting the leaching step such that the amount of oxidation is between about 9%-about 12%, and subjecting the partially oxidized material to a cyanide extraction step to recover the gold or silver.